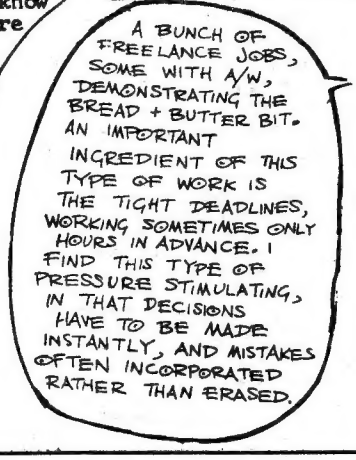
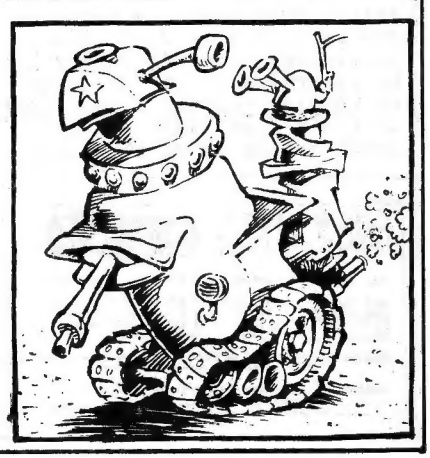
I WAS BORN IN 1952 IN NEWCASTLE
I'VE NEVER FINISHED ANY FORMAL TRAINING
AT PRESENT I WORK WITH AR:ZAK AT THE ARTS LAB PRESS IN BIRMINGHAM....
....PUBLISHING STREETCOMIX AND OTHERS, AND PRINTING
COMMITTED COMIX
MOON COMIX

COMIX WORLD 90. March 1, 1978. Copyright Clay Geerdes, P. O. Box 7081, Landscape Station, Berkeley, CA 94707. World Rights Reserved. Subs: $5 for 24 in U.S. $12 a year in Europe (airmailed). Back issues 50-present available for $5. If some good has come your way via CW, why not advertise & lend a hand? 1/4 page for $10 (5x7" camera-ready copy). Logo this issue by Hunt Emerson, definitely a man in the avant-garde of the New Wave of British comix. Hunt was a major organizer of the two KAKs (Konventions of Alternative Komix) and he works in the heart of the new scene at AR:ZAK, located in Birmingham, England. The creator of LARGE COW COMIX, PHOLK COMIX, DOGMAN, DOGFLY, and frequent contributor to mags like STREET QUOMIX (#4 has Hunt's surrealistic stuff in full color!), Hunt had a unique show of his originals at Wolverhampton Polytechnic (Jan 30-Feb 17, 1977). When the Arts Lab published DOGMAN, written by Paul Fisher, they launched the book with a stage show which toured for 15 performances. Emerson's MEE and YOW, THE BLACK COUNTRY CATS appeared in a Birmingham mag called GRAPEVINE. He had stories in MOON COMIX I and MIXED BUNCH and COMMITTED COMIX, all nice books which ought to be imported to America. Here's a paragraph from one of Hunt's letters: "Chris Welch & me went to Comicon in London last weekend (a straight comix mart/con) & appeared on a panel to talk about alternative comix. Panel!? There was only Mal Burns of Brainstorm apart from us, & nobody "against," so we

H CLAY GEERDES COMIX WORLD E

had to elicit questions from the audience. These tended to range around the 'Do you think an underground superhero is a possibility?'level--not really what we're into. This coupled with the fact that the party the night before had unavoidably detained us until 4 am meant it was a little irrelevant. Ah me! It's a hard life being a doodler . . . . ." Right now, the guys at Arts Lab need a distributor. Contact Hunt and discuss it. You can write him at 86 Church Hill Road, Hansdworth, Birmingham 20 England.* David Noon is at work on MOON COMIX 3. He writes: "I don't agree with you that the British UGs are like the comix in the states 10 years ago. It's maybe true of the 'Brainstorm' series, and one or two others, but the majority have very little similarity, except maybe for certain influences in drawing styles. A lot of the artists are very young and probably don't even know what the American comics looked like. I think you're being rather unfair to outfits like AR:ZAK, whose material I find fresh and original (I'm not including 'Moon Comix' here for obvious reasons). I think the main link with those times is the enthusiasm happening here, people doing comix for the love and fun of it, whereas in the States, it's now big business, which means compromise, which leads to things getting stale and tired." Of course I agree with David in some ways (re AR:ZAK's creativity, for example), but it's not really big biz here, nor has it become stale and tired, just different. In DIRTY LAUNDRY 2, I don't think Crumb is tired, just upset and harassed. He has always drawn from his personal life in his work and that life isn't going all that well for him lately so how can we expect any happy-go-lucky fantasies? I still expect to see a lot of interesting stuff from Americans.


A BUNCH OF FREELANCE JOBS, SOME WITH A/W, DEMONSTRATING THE BREAD + BUTTER BIT. AN IMPORTANT INGREDIENT OF THIS TYPE OF WORK IS THE TIGHT DEADLINES, WORKING SOMETIMES ONLY HOURS IN ADVANCE. I FIND THIS TYPE OF PRESSURE STIMULATING, IN THAT DECISIONS HAVE TO BE MADE INSTANTLY, AND MISTAKES OFTEN INCORPORATED RATHER THAN ERASED.



R. DIGGS!

Great Diggs of '77: The Year in Cartoons, by R. Diggs (Rip-Off Press, 1977). $1.

He describes himself as "the undertaker of western civilization." For embalming fluid, to fill the cavernous corpse, he uses artist's ink. Harry Driggs -- better known to his readers as Diggs -- is a powerful political cartoonist who has poked his barbed pen into corporate boardrooms, senate chambers and the Oval Office.

Diggs' vehicle is the alternative press. For the past decade, as underground newspapers have come and gone throughout the Bay Area, Diggs' work has appeared in most of them. His muckraking manifestos have appeared regularly on the pages of the **Barb** for the past year. Many of these, along with other Diggs cartoons of 1977, have recently appeared in a miniature Rip-Off edition. The book takes on every theme 1977 had to offer -- agribusiness, imperialism, neutron bombs, government corruption, the medical industry and Diggs' own favorite enemy, the oil conglomerates.

The visual puns which lie at the heart of each Diggs drawing surround complex issues and turn them into single statements of understanding. The dialogue is in the tradition of Mark Twain -- biting satire or quick, superficial banter revealing a sudden contradiction. In one drawing, aimed at piercing the institutionalized racism of U.S. college aptitude tests, he shows two teenagers cramped into high school desks. The white student is saying: "Hey! I don't know about this new IQ test ... what's a chitterling?" Meanwhile, the black teenager thinks: "Well, I'll be damned. I guess whitey must be just naturally stupid."

"Writing is the most important part of a cartoon," Diggs states. "That's what gives it a whack," he explains, slapping a fist into his palm.

Diggs is more than a humorist, an accomplished craftsperson and social critic: he's also an interpretive journalist. A favorite target for this California resident is, of course, corporate agribusiness. One of his most popular frames shows two top-hatted capitalists standing beside a table covered with a miniature single-family farm -- complete with cow, barn, picket fence, children playing, and Ma and Pa looking up in bewilderment. Above them, Mr. Big is saying to Mr. Bucks: "Watch this. . ." as he prepares to rip the tablecloth land out from under the farm.

"I'm trying to get my friends to laugh at my enemies," Diggs says of his drawings, some of which take several weeks to complete. His one-panel cartoons have appeared in hundreds of newspapers throughout the United States and are distributed weekly by the Rip-Off Press Comix Syndicate.

Diggs began his stint with the alternative press as art director and cartoonist for the **San Francisco Express Times**, which in the late Sixties became the **Good Times** media collective. He soon split with the group and dropped out of politics for over a year, bitterly disappointed in the alternative media. He eventually decided to give it another try, however, first working for the **San Francisco Bay Guardian**, then switching to the **Barb** in late 1976.

The color cover of Diggs' new half-size comic collection is a self-caricature. The fearless cartoonist, with a paper bag covering most of his head, defends himself with a garbage can lid from an unseen assailant who is hurling pieces of machinery at him. In the artist's left hand, he holds a shovel. "Yeah, that's how I imagine myself," Diggs admits.

The book also includes a brief running narrative of the year's events, added by Diggs to elucidate the cartoons. Unfortunately, the text is slow and seems unnecessary. Besides, a Diggs cartoon needs no explanation. -- **Charles Raisch**

from BARB #150 2-24-78

INSTANT COMIX 'N DRAWINGS

A new series of 'alternative comix' featuring strips, illos., jams, dogs, rocks, and other fine works of art; with all new work by Douglas Bryson, Howard Cruse, John Edgar, George Erling, Greg Erling, Brad Foster, Doug Hansen, Denis Kitchen, Joel Milke, Tucker Petertil, Artie Romero, Greg Spagnola, Bob Vojtko, Larry Weir and Gary Whitney!!!

Issues #1, 2, & 3 are $.25 ea. p.p.

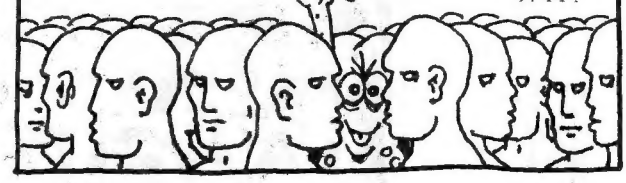
Issues #4 & 5 are $.35 ea. p.p.

A limited edition of hand colored covers of Instant #1 are available for $5.00 each. They will be be signed and numbered and ONLY 10 copies will be sold!!

Also, still available, Yikes #3, a 'funny' science fiction issue. 20 pages with many of the above artists in blue or gold covers - $.50 each.

Send to:

George Erling
357 N. P. Turnpike
Pompton Plains, NJ
07444



CAN YOU BE A PUBLISHER IN NEW MEXICO? This from Jack Venooker who did THE JOURNAL OF POPULAR CULTURE, probably one of the best independently produced graphic art mags of '77: ". . . when you look at what the ugs were and now look at what they are becoming, why must there be a faction? Why must creativity, however crude, become a threat to that which is already established? Sure, these guys poured their lives into it, and now they're pushing forty, but can any of them ever say that their work was for nothing? No, none of them can, because they know what the medium was, and what it can still become. Why are they re-drawing and re-using their best shots? Why have ugs boiled down to the Freak Bros and Zap? True, they are the essence of what the ugs are, but these comix are a statement, if you will, a declaration that cannot and will not be denied. That the guy who helps you out today may take your action tomorrow is only true if the person involved doesn't give a damn about the comix. You said yourself what sells is what becomes the standard, but how many good, albeit amateur, comix are being published today that people who would normally buy them cannot, because the distributor only stocks items that sell? My experience with the store owners in New Mexico is that they don't like to buy quantity from solo publishers. They'd rather buy from the distributor. My experience with the distributor has been negative re Popular Culture 1 and AlienNation (because of it's size--It's an eight pager). I guess what you say about having to do it yourself is true. . . 2/1/78

In Hollywood, I interviewed Scott Shaw re his split with Star*Reach's Quack. Publisher Mike Friedrich had his say in Quack 6 and I thought Scott ought to have a chance to tell his side. He said he didn't think Mike really understood Quack. Originally, he wanted to cash in on the popularity of Howard the Duck, but as the mag progressed, no clear concept developed. "I didn't like the way it was going. Mike didn't like my Gibbons character, and he seemed more anxious to meet a regular schedule than to produce a quality book. Ground-Level! That means ug wages for og work. After awhile, I decided if I was going to work that cheap, I'd like to do something better." Like most artists who have worked in ugs, Scott doesn't like the static nature of the pay. Ug page rates aren't much better in 1978 than they were back in 1969. Right now, he's inking for Hanna-Barbera at $25 a page. H-B pays $40 for pencils. Meantime, Scott has his own comic underway. -Clay Geerdes 2-78

ADVERTISE

Full Page	$35.00	8 1/2 x 11" camera-ready copy
Half Page	$20.00	7 1/4 x 11 1/2" copy
Quarter Page	$10.00	5 x 7" copy
Eighth Page	$5.00	2 1/2 x 3 3/4" copy
Business Card	$3.00	Copy of card

Deadlines: Copy goes in next issue after date received. SASE for return of ad copy.

Flyers: Your flyer mailed to GW readership. $25. Query for details.

Comics were the first literate experience for generations of Americans who followed the adventures, mishaps and buffoonery of their paper heroes and heroines for years on end. Successful strips often ran for decades -- far longer than the life span of TV shows with flesh and blood characters. They were to popular culture then what television is today, supplying a unified, shared cultural experience that combined story-telling humor and a reflection of changing social values. -JASON WEICHTER.

CARTOONS MAGAZINE 493

1930 - THE MICKEY MOUSE!

Drawn for Cartoons Magazine by Lansing Campbell

Mr. Mouse: Don't be alarmed, my dear, it's only one of those cubist statues!